



DELTA REGIONAL AUTHORITY

PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT

For immediate release

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Delta Regional Authority Announces 2003 Federal Grant Program

On May 5, 2003, Delta Regional Authority (DRA) Federal Co-Chairman Pete Johnson and State Co-Chairman Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee announced the start of the DRA's 2003 Federal Grant Program. With the announcement, Chairman Johnson and the Governors of the eight participating member states made available to their Members of Congress, the Region's 44 local development districts (LDDs) and the general public its "Uniform Pre-Application Package" for the DRA 2003 Federal Grant Program.

"It is with a great sense of excitement that we, at the Delta Regional Authority, are pleased to present the DRA 2003 Federal Grant Program," said Chairman Johnson. "As we look back over the first-full year of the Authority, we are very proud of the program, and we have learned a lot in this first year."

"We have been in regular contact with Members of Congress, the DRA states, local development districts and actual grantees getting feedback on how we could make the 2003 program a more accessible and efficient process. We can now ensure a higher-level of continuity that will not only help facilitate the quicker awarding and administration of grants but also bring the Authority's program more in line with similar agencies in the federal government."

Governor Huckabee also commented on the changes to the 2003 program, "While this, the second, DRA program will have the same goals and outcomes as the 2001/2002 grant program, you will notice that several things have changed, and we think for the better. And please note, as each point addresses a specific need which came to light during the first-year program, we want you to know that we listened to you."

For the DRA 2003 Federal Grant Program, the Authority will execute throughout the Region:

- Uniform and aggressive access to information on the DRA 2003 Federal Grant Program through its website, www.dra.gov, from which you can review and download the entire "DRA Uniform Pre-Application

Package”, plus each state’s “State Plan” and the DRA’s “Comprehensive Action Plan”.

- Uniform pre-applications and uniform full applications,
- Uniform definitions of eligible activities and categories – also, greater clarification of the program’s eligibility requirements,
- Uniform timelines and process-compliance,
- Stronger roles for the Local Development Districts to better publicize the program within their areas and to better educate their clients to the 2003 processes, both through public forums and other appropriate outreach, while assisting their clients in the preparation of their pre-applications.
- Greater and earlier collaboration with the “Administering Agencies”, who will serve as the project administrators for most projects.

Total overall funding for the DRA Federal Grant Program has gone from slightly over \$28 million for the 2001/2002 program years to \$6.2 million for the 2003 program.

The following table presents the results of the “State Allocation Formula”, which was adopted unanimously by the DRA Board and which will allocate the grant dollars for the Region to the member states in the following amounts:

State	State Allocation	Allocation Percentage
Alabama	\$613,954.62	10%
Arkansas	974,302.44	16%
Illinois	545,051.13	9%
Kentucky	560,432.07	9%
Louisiana	1,151,199.40	19%
Mississippi	897,062.73	15%
Missouri	740,225.17	12%
Tennessee	\$677,772.43	11%
Total	\$6,159,999.99	100%

According to its enacting legislation, the DRA must prioritize the use of its Federal funds in the following categories:

1. Basic public infrastructure in distressed counties,
2. Transportation infrastructure to facilitate economic development,
3. Business development with an emphasis on entrepreneurship and

4. Job training or employment-related education.

The Delta Regional Authority is a federal-state partnership, created by the U.S. Congress through the “Delta Regional Authority Act of 2000,” and it serves a 240-county/parish area in an eight-state region. Its governing authority, the Board, is comprised of the Federal Co-Chairman, Patrick “Pete” Johnson, plus the Governor of each participating state (AL, AR, IL, KY, LA, MS, MO and TN).

The DRA’s mission, simply stated, is to:

“Remedy severe and chronic economic distress by stimulating economic development while fostering partnerships that will have a positive impact on the Region’s economy.”

For more information on the Authority, please visit <http://www.dra.gov> or contact R.L. Condra at 888-GO TO DRA. And please, subscribe to the DRA’s weekly, emailed, newsletter, the DRA Communiqué, which can be done within www.dra.gov.

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